Appln. No. 09/909,123
Amdt. Dated September 19, 2005
Reply to Office Action of April 18, 2005

Docket No. 2000-0328

Listing of Claims:

1.   A method for evaluating the performance of a customer's virtual private network (VPN) network access arrangements from an alternate access connection, comprising the steps of:

downloading a test through a network backbone to a network that will produce ~~a virtual private network (~~the VPN~~)~~ for a user to simulate interactions with the VPN and the alternate access connection;

testing the data-carrying performance of the VPN with respect to the alternate access connection;

comparing results of the test that has been downloaded to benchmarks for the test that could be run on a set of access connections to the backbone from other than ~~an~~ the alternate access connection; and

reporting the results of the comparison to providers of the VPN to customers.

2.   The method recited in claim 1, wherein the benchmark~~ed tests~~ comprise~~s~~ a member of the group consisting essentially of Internet web page fetches, Intranet web page fetches, form processing, mail fetches, Service Access Point (SAP) transactions, PeopleSoft transactions, queries to Internet servers, and voice over IP (VoIP).

3.   The method recited in claim 2, further comprising the step of providing the results of the comparison to customers of the VPN.

4.   The method recited in claim 3, wherein the VPN has been created and is being used by customers and further comprising the step of retesting the VPN to characterize raw throughput of data.

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5.   The method recited in claim 4~~1~~, wherein the comparing step comprises the step of ~~downloading the~~comparing the results of the test to benchmarks ~~through a set of~~for access connections that are leased lines.

6.   The method recited in claim 4~~1~~, wherein ~~the~~ the VPN that is produced is a simulation of a customer's VPN before the VPN is created~~the comparing step comprises the step of downloading the benchmarks through access connections comprising leased lines and modems~~.

7.   The method recited in claim 6~~3~~, further comprising the step of improving access to the VPN for customers of the VPN based on the comparison.

8.   A method for improving access to a virtual private network (VPN), comprising the steps of:

simulating interactions with the VPN from access by an alternate access connection by downloading a test through a network that will produce the VPN, testing the data-carrying performance of the VPN with the alternate access connection, and comparing results of the test with a benchmark for the test that would have connected to the VPN through an access connections other than from ~~an~~the alternate access connection; and

adjusting access to the VPN as a result of the comparisons made.

9.   The method recited in claim 8, wherein the simulating step comprises the steps of:

downloading ~~a~~the test through a network backbone to ~~a~~the network ~~that will produce the VPN for a user to simulate interactions with the VPN and the alternate access connection~~; and

comparing results of the test that has been downloaded to a plurality of benchmarks for the test that could be run on a set of access connections to the backbone from other than an alternate access connection.

10.   The method recited in claim 9, wherein the ~~benchmarks~~ benchmarked test comprises a member of the group consisting essentially of Internet web page fetches, Intranet web page fetches, form processing, mail fetches, Service Access Point (SAP) transactions, PeopleSoft transactions, queries to Internet servers, and voice over IP (VoIP).

11.   The method recited in claim 10, <u>wherein the VPN has been created and is being used by customers and</u> further comprising the step of providing the results of the comparison to customers of the VPN.

12.   The method recited in claim 11, further comprising the step of retesting the VPN to characterize raw throughput of data.

13.   The method recited in claim 12, wherein the comparing step comprises the step of ~~downloading the~~<u>comparing the results of the test to</u> benchmarks ~~through a set of~~<u>for access connections that are</u> leased lines.

14.   The method recited in claim 12, wherein <u>the VPN that is produced is a simulation of a customer's VPN before the VPN is created</u>~~the comparing step comprises the step of downloading the benchmarks through access connections comprising leased lines and modems.~~